

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO ALL EAST ASIAN AND PACIFIC DIPLOMATIC POSTS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

INFO CINCPAC

CMDT COAST GUARD

GOV GUAM

DEPT OF THE TREASURY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, XC, US

SUBJECT:MAY 21 EA PRESS SUMMARY

1. CHINA

OFFICIAL PRC SPOKESMAN SAID FRIDAY THAT FOREIGN PRESS SPECULATION ABOUT POSSIBILITY MAO DEAD/DYING IS "UTTER NONSENSE." SPOKESMAN HAD NO COMMENT ON PEKING RUMORS THAT MAJOR MEETING CCP LEADERS MAY BE IMMINENT OR IN PROGRESS (REUTER PEKING).

CHINESE FEEL THIS YEAR'S CROPS LIKELY BE AFFECTED BY RECENT ADVERSE WEATHER, ACCORDING FOREIGN SOURCES PEKING. SOURCES SAID PRC OFFICIAL, SPEAKING TO VISITING DELEGATION, DID NOT GO INTO DETAILS, BUT ACKNOWLEDGED WEATHER HAMPERING FARMING IN SOME REGIONS. ANOTHER SOURCE TOLD REUTER THAT WEATHER HAS INTERFERED WITH WHEAT/RICE CROPS IN UNCLASSIFIED

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SOUTHERN PRC, BUT TOO EARLY SAY IF ANY LASTING DAMAGE. ADDED THAT OUTLOOK IN NORTHERN PART OF COUNTRY SAME AS LAST YEAR, AND WITH LITTLE MORE RAIN HARVEST THERE SHOULD BE IN "GOOD SHAPE." MEANWHILE, TRAIN TRAVELERS REPORTED

SEEING LARGE TRACTS FLOODED LAND NEAR KWEILIN AND SAID
RAIL SERVICES DISRUPTED (REUTER PEKING 5/20).

2. JAPAN

HALLORAN (NYT) REPORTS CONTINUING DEBATE OVER ECONOMY'S
FUTURE. QUESTION ARISES WHETHER JAPAN CAN RECOVER
10-PCT GROWTH RATE AS BEFORE OIL CRISIS, OR MUST BE
SATISFIED WITH FAR LESS PROGRESS. JAPAN ECONOMIC
RESEARCH CENTER OPTIMISTIC; GOJ ADVISORS LESS SO.

ELEVEN-MAN MISSION FROM JAPANESE AIR SELF-DEFENSE FORCE
LEFT TOKYO FRIDAY FOR US FOR POSSIBLE SELECTION NEW
MAINSTAY FIGHTER AIRCRAFT TO REPLACE LOCKHEED F104J
(REUTER TOKYO).

SIX JAPANESE NUKE POWER PLANT MFRS WILL SUBMIT COST
ESTIMATES TO SOVIETS NEXT MONTH FOR SIX 1,000,000-
KILOWATT ATOMIC POWER GENERATING UNITS. PRICE EXPECTED
AROUND 667 MIL DOLS, BUT COULD RISE TO 2 BIL (CULLISON,
JOC).

JAPANESE FISHERMEN WERE LAST TO SPOT ROWBOAT WHICH CON-
TAINED 4 US SAILOR" WHOSE NOW IDENTIFIED BODIES
WASHED ASHORE SOUTH OF TOKYO BETWEEN SAT-TUES (AP TOKYO).

JAPANESE MOTOR-VEHICLE OUTPUT ROSE 18.9 PCT OVER LAST
YR, MARKING RECORD HIGH (WSJ).

KAWASAKI, NIPPON STEEL WILL RAISE PFICES 30.30 DOLS
EFFECTIVE JULY (WSJ).

3. INDOCHINA/THAILAND

IN ARTICLE ON CREDIBILITY CANDIDATE CARTER, NYT'S MOHR
POINTS OUT AT TIME VN WAR HE WAS STRONG SUPPORTER US
INVOLVEMENT, BUT EARLIER THIS MONTH HE CHARACTERIZED
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WAR AS "RACIST"; IN APR '71 JIMMY DESCRIBED LT CALLEY
AS "SCAPEGOAT," WHILE AT RECENT NEWS CONFERENCE CARTER
DENIED HE HAD SUPPORTED CALLEY OR CONDONED HIS ACTIONS.

RTG MFA ANNOUNCES US CIVILIANS WILL TRAIN THAIS IN USE
US MIL EQUIPMENT AFTER JULY 20 PULLOUT MIL TECHNICIANS
(WP). CDN'S TAMARKIN (5/18) REPORTS US, PRESSED BY
EXPANDING USSR PRESENCE SEA, SUGGESTING TO RTG RETENTION
SOME US MIL FACILITIES; SAYS AMB WHITEHOUSE WILL DELIVER
MEMO SEEKING RENEGOTIATION WITHDRAWAL. NOTES SENI TAKES
SOFTER LINE THAT KUKRIT, ASSERTING NEW AVENUES MAY
BE SOUGHT IN FRESH ROUNDS TALKS WITH US. TAMARKIN ALSO
HEARS GROWING REPORTS USSR DICKERING FOR USE VN CAM RANH

BAY COMPLEX.

4. BURMA

TOURISM PRODUCES DISCORDANT NOTES IN MANDALAY AS INCREASING NUMBERS TRAVELING ON CHEAP BECOME NUISANCE OTHER TRAVELERS, PAY WAY WITH ILLEGAL SALES CIGARETTES, WHISKY. DURING RECENT TRADITIONAL WATER FESTIVAL, POLICE HAD TO DISPERSE ANGRY CROWD AFTER TOURIST BEAT UP BOY FOR THROWING WATER ON HIM (REUTER, NYT).

5. PHILIPPINES

UNIDENTIFIED GUNMEN SEIZED PAL BAC 111 FRIDAY WHILE ON DOMESTIC FLIGHT FROM DAVAO CITY, FORCED IT LAND ZAMBOANGA, DEMAND 375,000-DOL RANSOM; 103 PASSENGERS ABROAD, INCLUDING POSSIBLY SOME AMERICANS, JAPANESE. NO OFFICIAL DETAILS AVAILABLE IMMEDIATELY (REUTER MANILA).

"UNSEASONAL" TYPHOON OLGA KILLS 7, FORCES 10,000 FLEE QUEZON CITY IN WORST FLOODING MANILA AREA IN 30 YRS. MARCOS DECLARES STATE OF EMERGENCY IN 5 PROVS AROUND CAPITAL (AP SUN, NYT). PRES ADDS STORM CAUGHT ENGINEERS CONSTRUCTING 15 MILLION DOLS WORTH FLOOD-CONTROL PROJECTS IN MANILA AREA UNPREPARED; WORK WAS BEING RUSHED FOR COMPLETION BY JUNE, USUAL START TYPHOON SEASON (AP, SUN).

6. KOREA

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FRENCH PRES GISCARD D'ESTAING TOLD REPORTERS THURS HIS DECISION NOT AUTHORIZE SALE NUKE PLANT TO SK, WHICH COULD HAVE BEEN USED IN NORTH KOREAN NUCLEAR WEAPONS, WAS "DECIDED PERSONALLY, WITHOUT ANY EXTERNAL PRESSURE"; BUT FORD ADMIN REPORTEDLY EXERTED STRONG PRESSURE ON SK, MADE US OPPOSITION KNOWN TO FRANCE (HOAGLAND, WP).

DOD ANNOUNCES RUMSFELD WILL MEET SK DEF MIN SUH JYONG CHUL IN HONOLULU 5/26 FOR 2-DAY DISCUSSION MUTUAL DEFENSE MATTERS (REUTER).

CONGRESSIONAL EFFORT TO SLASH CONCESSIONAL SALES FOOD COMMODITIES TO SK AS SIGN DISAPPROVAL PARK GOVT ABANDONED, DUE OPPOSITION BY FARM STATE CONGRESSMEN (REUTER 5/20).

SK COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY MIN ANNOUNCES GULF OIL WILL RELINQUISH 25,200 SQ MI OIL CONCESSION OFF SK COAST, STRETCHING TO E CHINA SEA. SPECULATES GULF MAY BE ATTEMPTING AVOID INT'L DISPUTE IN AREA, OVER WHICH PRC ALSO CLAIMS JURISDICTION. SEOUL REPORTEDLY ALREADY IN CONTACT WITH NON-AMERICAN OIL FIRM TO REPLACE GULF (UPI, JOC; NYT; WSJ).

PRES PARK ASSIGNS MIN OF EDUCATION OFFICIALS TO COORDINATE EFFORT IN ATTEMPT "PURIFY" KOREAN LANGUAGE, DRIVING OUT FON WORDS, MAINLY ENGLISH, JAPANESE. MINISTRY OFFICIAL SAYS COMPLIANCE WILL BE VOLUNTARY (HALLORAN, NYT).

SEOUL CORRESPONDENTS' CLUB, REPRESENTING FON JOURNALISTS, PROTESTED IN WRITING THAT POLICE, GOVT OFFICIALS HAMPERED REPORTERS COVERING SK POLITICAL DISSIDENT TRIALS (WP).

7. INDONESIA

GOI ANNOUNCES PERTAMINA DEBTS REDUCED FROM 10.5 TO 6.2 BILLION DOLS BY CANCELLATION NUMBER PROJECTS, CHANGING TERMS AGREEMENT WITH FOREIGN CONTRACTORS; GOVT LOAN 2.137 BILLION DOLS. ADDS GOI PREPARING SELL NUMBER PERTAMINA ASSETS TO PAY OFF REMAINING DEBT (REUTER JAKARTA).

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GOI TRYING GET ADDITIONAL 2.50 DOLS PROFIT PER PBL FROM FOREIGN OIL FIRMS WORKING UNDER PRODUCTION-SHARING CONTRACTS (UPI, JOC).

8. AUSTRALIA

TREASURER SAYS GOVT SLASHING SPENDING PLANS FOR COMING FY BY 2,600 MILLION AUSSIE DOLS, WITH EXPENDITURE IN NEARLY EVERY AREA GOVT ACTIVITY CUT BACK. POSSIBILITY MORE SPENDING REDUCTIONS, NEW REVENUE MEASURES MAY BE IN BUDGET TO BE INTRODUCED IN AUG (JOC).

GOA SEEKS WAYS RESETTLE 3000 CHINESE, MALAY INHABITANTS CHRISTMAS ISLAND BY END CENTURY WHEN PHOSPHATE RUNS OUT. ESTIMATED 80 PCT WANT MOVE TO AUSTRALIA, BUT GOA FEARS BAD RESETTLEMENT PLAN COULD LEAD TO BREAKDOWN AUSSIE IMMIGRATION LAWS (REUTER, NYT).

NABISCO REGISTERS FIRST PROFIT IN AUSTRALIA AFTER 7 YRS OPERATIONS (JOC).

COMMENT AND ANALYSIS

9. CHINA

SUN'S ISAACS (HK) THINKS MAO ERA SEEMS DRAWING PERCEPTIBLY CLOSER FINAL END. SAYS UNMISTAKABLE SIGNS SHOW CHAIRMAN'S HEALTH HAS DECLINED IN RECENT WEEKS, WEAKNESS FORCING HIM CURTAIL AUDIENCES WITH FOREIGN VISITORS. WHILE RUMORS OF MAO'S IMMINENT DEATH HAVE SURFACED MANY TIMES BEFORE AND ALWAYS PROVED FALSE, NEVER BEFORE HAVE SIGNS OF HIS

FAILING HEALTH MULTIPLIED SO RAPIDLY, SO CURRENT WAVE
SPECULATION HAS MORE SOMBER AURA OF IMMEDIACY THAN IN
PAST.

ACCORDING ISAACS, OF CHAIRMAN'S RECENT 15-MINUTE
AUDIENCES WITH FOREIGN VISITORS HALF TIME-SOMETIMES
MORE--NEEDED FOR TRANSLATION, BECAUSE HIS INTERPRETERS
OCCASIONALLY HAVE TROUBLE UNDERSTANDING MUMBLED SPEECH,
MUST WAIT FOR HIM BRUSH FEW CHARACTERS ON NOTEPAPER
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TO MAKE SURE THEY HAVE UNDERSTOOD. WITH ANOTHER
MINUTE OR SO SUBTRACTED FOR PLEASANTRIES, ONLY ABOUT
4-5 MINUTES LEFT FOR SUBSTANTIVE CONVERSATION--HARDLY
ENOUGH FOR MOST SHPERFICIAL TREATMENT ANY ISSUE. HUA
KUO-FENG NOW INCREASINGLY REGARDED BY CHINA-WATCHERS
AS MAN WHO COULD WELL ASSUME/HOLD POWER IN OWN RIGHT,
EVEN WITHOUT MAO'S PRESTIGIOUS SUPPORT; BUT POST-MAO
LEADERSHIP SEEMS LIKELY BE COLLECTIVE ONE.

ISAACS SAYS MOST CHINA-WATCHERS BELIEVE WOULD TAKE
FURTHER MAO INTERVENTION TO EXTEND LEADERSHIP SHAKEUP
TO POINT WHERE RADICALS LEFT IN CHARGE CCP. BUT IN
VIEW HIS SLIPPING HEALTH, SUCH INTERVENTION APPEARS LESS
LIKELY WIT EVERY PASSING WEEK.

WSTAR'S BRADSHER (5/20) SEES CHINESE RADICALS SEEKING
NEW ROUND PURGES. FEELS SITUATION HAS OVERTONES OF
THEIR DESIRE USE AUTHORITY OF MAO WHILE HE STILL LIVES,
HOPING LEVER SELVES INTO POWERFUL POSITION.

ZORZA (WP) FINDS EVERY INDICATION PEKING LEADERSHIP
DISPUTE REMAINS UNRESOLVED, AND THAT AT ROOT OF STRUGGLE
GOING ON BEHIND SCENES IN SIZE PLA. TENG AND SUPPORTERS
HAD URGED MIL CUT OF ABOUT MILLION MEN; THIS LED TO
TENG'S DOWNFALL, ALTHOUGH HIS PURPOSE HAD BEEN STRENGTHEN
PLA, NOT WEAKEN IT, SINCE CUTS HE PROPOSED WOULD COME
FROM MIL PERSONNEL ASSIGNED POLITICAL DUTIES, OLDER
MEN AND PRIVATE ARMIES MAINTAINED EY REGIONAL COMMANDERS.
AFTER CHOU'S DEATH, RADICALS RALLIED SUPPORT REGIONAL
MIL COMMANDERS WHOSE INTERESTS WOULD HAVE BENE ADVERSELY
AFFECTED OY TENG'S REFORMS, ABLE BLOCK HIS APPOINTMENT
AS NEW PERMIER. INFLUENCE OF MARSHAL YEH CHIEN-YING
HELPED SELECTION HUA. SBUT STRUGGLE ONCE AGAINST BEING
JOINED ON MIL ISSUE, WHICH IS CENTRAL BECAUSE PLA STILL
LEVER CONTROLLING PEKING POWER SHIFTS AND WILL EXERT
DECISIVE INFLUENCE WHEN MAO DIES.

10. INDOCHINA/CHINA

ROSENFELD (WP) REVIEWS FOREIGN POLICY PARTS DEM PARTY
PUBLICATION, "PRIORITIES FOR '76: A CHOICE FOR THE

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DEMOCRATIC PARTY." NOTES ASIAN SECTION, INCLUDING STRONG NEGATIVE ON INDOCHINA AID, SIGNED BY SPECTRUM INCLUDING ROBERT SCALAPINO, FRANCES FITZGERALD; FEELS THIS PROVES GREAT DEM DIVIDE OVER VN LIES IN PAST. SAYS LARGE DEM COMPLAINT AGAINST REP POLICY IS THAT REPS HAVE PAID TOO MUCH ATTENTION TO USSR, PRC, NOT ENOUGH TO OTHER ALLIES, AREAS.

10. ASEAN/INDOCHINA

UPI (BALTO N-A 5/20) NOTES MALAYSIA, PHILS, SINGAPORE ANNOUNCE ESTABLISHING RELS WITH PP, WHILE RTG EARLIER SET UP TIES, HOLDS WEEKLY BORDER MEETINGS. INTERPRETS APPROACH TO CAMBODIA AS EXPRESSION ONCE AGAIN INTENTION MAKE FRIENDS WITH NEW COMMUNIST INDOCHINA REGIMES. BELIEVES RESTORATION RELS BETWEEN ASEAN MEMBERS, VN WILL BE JUST MATTER OF TIME AFTER VN REUNIFICATION. NOTES ASEAN WOULD LIKE EXPAND MEMBERSHIP, BUT HAS NO ILLUSION ABOUT INDOCHINA, BURMA JUMPING IN IMMEDIATELY.

11. THAILAND

IN BANGKOK, TAMARKIN (CDN 5/18) DOES ITEM ON POPULARITY TRADITIONAL MEDICINE, WITH MANY HERBS IMPORTED FROM PRC, INDIA, KOREA, JAPAN, INDONESIA. SAYS WITH 60 PCT THAI POPULATION HAVING SOME TYPE INTESTINAL PARASITE, MOST PEOPLE USE HERBAL STOMACH REMEDIES AT SOME TIME. NOTES THAI HERBAL REMEDIES CONSIDERED Milder THAN CHINESE. ROBINSON

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